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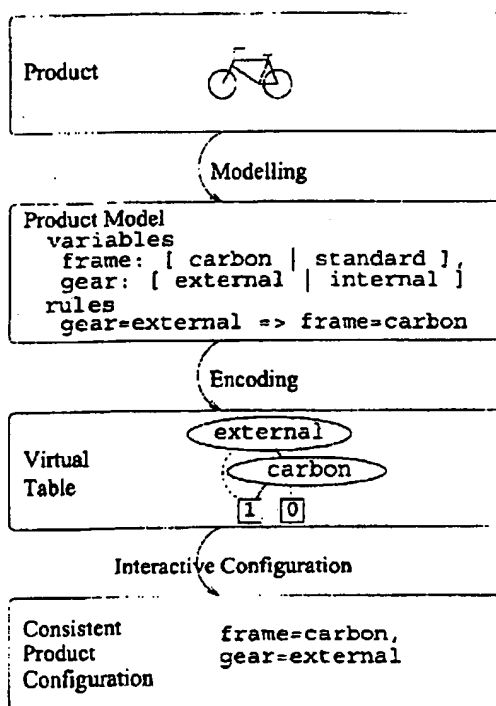
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(54) Title: A METHOD OF CONFIGURING A PRODUCT USING A DIRECTED ACYCLIC GRAPH



(57) Abstract: A complex product is composed of several parts, where each part may depend on the other. As a consequence of these inter-dependencies, the selection of one part might exclude other parts from being included in the finished product. A *consistent configuration* is a selection of parts where all inter-dependencies are satisfied. A computer program for computer-assisted configuration helps an end-user to make choices that will lead to a consistent product. The preferred embodiment of the present invention, *Virtual Tabulation*, is a method for keeping track of inter-dependencies a large number of parts, to allow for the construction of an efficient and exact configuration program. Such a program allows interactive configuration over networks (e.g., the Internet). Another aspect of the invention, called *Smart Search*, allows a set of inter-dependencies among parts to be computed from a product database.

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

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 A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
 IPC 7 G06F17/60

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

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Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

WPI Data, INSPEC, EPO-Internal

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	SABIN D ET AL: "PRODUCT CONFIGURATION FRAMEWORKS - A SURVEY" IEEE EXPERT, IEEE INC. NEW YORK, US, vol. 13, no. 4, 1 July 1998 (1998-07-01), pages 42-49, XP000791757 ISSN: 0885-9000 the whole document	1-42
Y	W0 00 13113 A (ANDERSSSEN H R ET AL) 9 March 2000 (2000-03-09) page 2, line 18 - line 25 abstract the whole document	1-42

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☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

☒ Patent family members are listed in annex.

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"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

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Date of the actual completion of the international search

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C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	ATTARDI G ET AL: "Web-based configuration assistants." AI EDAM ARTIF. INTELL. ENG. DES. ANAL. MANUF., vol. 12, no. 4, September 1998 (1998-09), pages 321-331, XP002902516 CAMBRIDGE UNIV. PRESS (UK) ISSN: irn-issn 0890-0604. the whole document ---	1-9,25, 26, 32-37, 39-42
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A	US 5 825 651 A (GUPTA N ET AL) 20 October 1998 (1998-10-20) column 2, line 50 - line 60 column 5, line 67 -column 6, line 6 abstract; figure 5 -----	1-9,25, 26, 32-37, 39-42

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

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